

has said by the mouth of Jer. 32: 41-42, 'Yea I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in the land assuredly with my whole heart, and with my whole soul; for thus saith the Lord, like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.' This is positive language, and cannot be misunderstood; so the purpose of Christ is to fulfill the covenant made with the fathers.

I give it as my opinion that Christ will find Judah, or the two tribe kingdom, in other words the Jews largely returned, and in possession of Palestine at his coming, for the Prophet had declared that he would 'save the tents of Judah first,' and we have statistics proving that they are rapidly returning to 'their own land.' St. Matthew says, (24: 31) 'And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Norton renders this passage thus, 'And he will send forth his angels with a loud sound of trumpets, to collect his chosen from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' The Lord has told us the same thing by the prophets; His chosen shall be gathered, and as Christ brought the saints with Him, or will, when he comes, it cannot be the saints that he will gather from the four winds of the earth: then we must find who these are who shall be gathered.

When Christ sent out the twelve to preach, he told them, 'go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' Matt. 10: 5, 6. It will be remembered that Israel was carried captive into Assyria 725 years B. C., and Gentiles were in possession of their land and cities, and Samaria was the Capital of the ten tribes, hence it is plain that they were not there, for Christ told them plainly, not to go into any cities of the Gentiles and yet he tells them to 'go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' It is plain that they must find them elsewhere than at Samaria. Christ taught that 'salvation is of the Jews,' and that his 'Name should be preached to all nations beginning at Jerusalem.' After saying all this, He records the fact by John (10: 16) that other sheep have I, which are not of this fold.—are not of the Jews—'them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.' This is exactly what Ezk. taught 600 years before Christ came into the world. 'I will gather them (Israel) on every side, and bring them into their own land, and I will make them one nation in the land, and one King shall be King to them all, and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all, and they shall have one shepherd and they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes and as them.' Ezk. 37: 21, 22, 24.

This is the time that the north end of the Red sea will 'be utterly destroyed,' and the Nile will be dried that men can go over 'dry shod.' Isa. 11: 15. And this is the time also that the Lord will 'take Israel out of the countries whither he has driven them, and bring them in the wilderness, and will plead with them face to face, and purge out the rebels &c, &c, as he did Israel when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.'

Now if the fulfillment of these Scriptures are not a purpose of Christ's coming, and if they will not be fulfilled then, pray tell, what Christ will come for and when will these Scriptures be fulfilled.

It is not only for the fulfillment of the promise that these people are gathered together again, but the Lord has another use for them, He says of them by Jer. (51: 20, 23) 'Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms, and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers.' The inference here is, that the Lord will use Israel after he has gathered them together, to subdue all nations. The Lord is going to be King of all the earth—when He was here before, He 'had not where to lay his head,' but as the earth is His when he comes again he is going to subdue it and the armies of Israel are to be his 'battle ax' where-with he 'will break in pieces the nations, and kingdoms.' Take notice it will be nations and kingdoms.

One would naturally suppose that the nations would submit to the Lord as their ruler, but I dare to say that they will no more acknowledge Him than they did when he was here on earth before. We might think that this nation—The U. S. would surely acknowledge him, but I dare to say again, that it will not; for this country would be the last one on earth to submit to a foreign Ruler, for they will not believe that it is Christ. If they knew that it was Christ they would probably submit, but they will not believe. Many, yea very many professed Christians will not believe what I am writing, and consequently will not believe the Scriptures, then how could it be expected that the people at large should believe and accept?

The prophet plainly states that all nations shall be gathered against Jerusalem to battle' &c. Zac. 14: 2. Please read the whole verse: 'Then shall the Lord go forth to fight against these nations,' (3 verse) with his 'battle ax' and when the Lord fights he will conquer as he did in the days of old; the same prophet even tells what the plague shall be with which the Lord shall smite the people with, who fought against Jerusalem. Please read 12 verse of Zac. 14, also 13, 14 and 15 verses: The 16 verse tells us that 'all those who are left of all these nations, shall go up to Jerusalem from year to year to worship, and if they go not up to worship they shall have no rain;' 17, 18 verses, and so thoroughly shall these nations be conquered, and so submissive will they become, 'that ten men shall lay hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew saying, we will go with you, for all have heard that God is with you.' Zac. 8: 23.

Now it is when the Lord is going to bless his people—his covenanted people as a nation, 'and all those that have become the sons of Abraham by faith in Christ Jesus.' The Lord says by the mouth of the Prophet Zac. concerning this time: 'But now will I not be unto the residue of this people as in the former days, for the seed shall be prosperous, the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew, and I will cause the remnant of this people to possess all these things,' and 'as ye were a curse so shall ye be a blessing;' and 'as I thought to punish you when your fathers provoked me to wrath * * * so again have thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah.' Zac. 8: 11, 15.

It was one of the conditions of the covenant made with Abraham, that 'in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blest.' I need hardly remark, that, that part of the covenant has not fully been fulfilled yet, for all nations have not yet received the Gospel of Christ, and even if they have, they have not been blest to the full meaning of the covenant. But when once Christ has subdued 'all nations and kingdoms,' and all have become subservient to his reign, to his will and power, and are in the full enjoyment of a peace, that he is able to give them, and not until then will the fact of the 'all nations, be blest' occur.

Choose if you please, from among all the nations of earth, one that you would think had received the blessing of the covenant, as per conditions—you would in all probability choose this nation, the U. S! Then I dare to say you are sadly mistaken. There are no doubt individuals in this country who have as much as is possible to receive, the blessing, enjoyed it, for Christ 'turned to the Gentiles to take out of the nations a people for his name,' and hence there are people who have partially enjoyed the blessings, as fully no doubt as is possible, in a sinful and wicked nation; but you will remember that the conditions of the covenant are that in thy seed, 'which is Christ,' as Paul says, 'shall all nations be blest.' The conditions of the covenant call for a national blessing—'all the nations of the earth,' not an individual nation, but all, as a whole.

There is also another purpose in Christ's coming, and it appears to me that it should transpire before the nations should, or could be fully blest. It has been the purpose of God to 'judge the world by the man Christ Jesus,' and Mat. 25: 31, 32, tell us 'when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory, and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.' It might not do for me to assert that this is the judgment, but this is a judgment,

and I give it as my opinion that this judgment will take place immediately after the subjugation of the nations. After the nations have been subdued by the armies of the Lord, there will yet remain those who are 'not willing to have the man Christ to reign over them,' and those that are not willing, will be destroyed from among the people. The prophet has told us that he would bring his people, Israel, into the wilderness and plead with them face to face, and would purge out the rebels. It is not unreasonable then that the other nation should be judged at a proper time, and that time would be very proper just when Christ begins his reign; 'for it is written as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God,' so it is evident that the rebels or, those that are not willing to submit to the reign of Christ will be purged out.

Many may feel to criticise this idea of the judgment, thinking that it will be done in a day, or in the day that Christ comes. That I find to be our trouble in understanding the Scripture properly, we jam too much together, we expect it all to be done at once because it is all told in the same narrative. I wish to remark here that God never forces anything on people while they have to do with this world. The world has grown to what it is now, by the help of God, and when Christ comes again, He is not going to take the world by storm, as is most generally believed; of course there is a determined purpose, and it will in the end be accomplished. But the gathering of Israel, the subjugation of the nations, the judging of the nations, and the setting up of the kingdom for the thousand year reign, will not all be done in a day, I should rather think that it would take 40 years to accomplish it.

Prominent among the purposes of Christ's coming is the setting up of THE KINGDOM on earth, of which I cannot treat directly in this chapter, but shall devote an entire chapter to it, as I deem it of considerable importance.

West Independence, Ohio.

If I mistake not, I promised the readers and editor of our excellent paper, to be more noisy in the future. Almost six months have elapsed since I last wrote, but we still live, and I hope no one has been disappointed. Most of us have learned that promises are much more easily made than kept, and this has been my experience with regard to writing.

Since my last, we have had some very pleasant times. First, came our old, and dearly beloved Bro. Samuel A. Leedy, of Missouri, who visited for some time here, among his many friends and relatives. It was our first meeting with him, and no doubt it shall be the last on earth. What a grand old brother he is! If all men were as unselfish, and loving as this veteran of the cross; the finger of scorn could never be pointed at hypocrites, for there'd be none. Good-by uncle Sam, may God bless you for the many words of cheer, and encouragement given me, and when your suffering is o'er, may He bestow upon you a crown of life, that fadeth not away, is the prayer of your young brother. Bro. A. M. Ridenour, (formerly pastor here) also came among us, and while here, favored us with some excellent discourses. He and his estimable wife have many friends here, who wish them well in their new work at Bryan. Brother Isaac Leedy, of Knox Co., was also with us and officiated at a communion held some time since. I was pleased to form his acquaintance, and to hear from him the words of truth. Come again Bro. Isaac.

I am still swinging the Gospel sledge, with varied effect; sometimes almost taking things by storm, but very often wishing a storm would take me. Experience is teaching me many things, but among the most important is this: when I place most confidence in self, I do the least, and when I rely most on a higher power, I succeed best. We may have many friends, but the Lord is invariably the best and truest one, man can have.

At the close of our last public service at this place, on extending an invitation, we were made glad in seeing three come out, and signify their desire to live and labor with us. These three, were Bro. Oscar Bryant, wife, and daughter. Brother Bryant, has been a minister of the Gospel for almost fifteen years, preaching for the Christians, or Campbellites. He will continue the work with us and my prayer to God is that he may be instrumental in doing much good. He is a man of ability, and no doubt will do much good.

Besides this place, I am preaching at two others, Deshler, and near Findlay; but lest my letter become too lengthy, I will stop for this time, and describe the work at the above places soon. Asking to be remembered in your prayers, in behalf of a protracted effort to begin here soon.

MARTIN SHIVELY.